

December 3, 2002

**SCOPING NOTICE**  
**BURLINGTON RESOURCES OIL AND GAS COMPANY LP**  
**LITTLE MONUMENT UNIT NATURAL GAS PROJECT**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Rock Springs Field Office**

Dear Reader:

Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company LP (Burlington) has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rock Springs Field Office that they want to initiate environmental review for additional wells in their Little Monument Unit located in Sections 21 through 23, and 26 through 28, Township 25 North and Range 111 West, 6<sup>TH</sup> Principal Meridian, Sweetwater County, Wyoming. The attached document serves as notice of the beginning of the environmental analysis process to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. If you are interested in participating in the process and have concerns, issues, or alternatives you would like to see addressed, please respond with your written comments by January 3, 2003. Send written comments to:

Address: Teri Deakins, Project Manager  
Rock Springs Field Office  
280 Highway 191 North  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Email: Teri\_Deakins@blm.gov (Please reference Little Monument Unit Project in the subject field)

Those who respond during public scoping will be provided with a copy of the document. Those who do not respond to public scoping will be notified that the document is available.

Written comments in response to this notice, including the names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the BLM Rock Springs Field Office during regular business hours (7:45-4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) after the comment period closes and may be published as part of the environmental process. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

If you have questions regarding the NEPA process or the project, please contact Teri Deakins at (307)-352-0211 or George Schoenfeld at (307)-352-0271.

Sincerely,

/s/ Henry Castillon

Henry Castillon  
Acting Field Manager

Attachment

**SCOPING NOTICE**  
**BURLINGTON RESOURCES OIL AND GAS COMPANY LP**  
**LITTLE MONUMENT UNIT NATURAL GAS PROJECT**

**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Rock Springs Field Office**

**Description of Project**

Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company LP (Burlington) has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rock Springs Field Office (RSFO) that the company intends to drill additional exploration and development wells within the administrative boundary of the BLM's Rock Springs Field Office. The proposed wells are located in the Little Monument Unit which is generally located 12.5 miles southeast of LaBarge, Wyoming in Sections 21 through 23, and 26 through 28, Township 25 North and Range 111 West, 6<sup>TH</sup> Principal Meridian, Sweetwater County, Wyoming as shown on the Map. The project area encompasses approximately 3,219 acres. The surface and mineral estate involved in the proposal are public lands managed by the BLM.

The Little Monument Unit has been previously analyzed for oil and gas development as part of the Lincoln Road area in the Fontenelle Natural Gas Infill Drilling Projects Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which analyzed well density of 160-acre to 80-acre spacing (4 to 8 wells per section). The Little Monument Unit presently contains 31 producing natural gas wells, 2 plugged and abandoned wellbores, and 1 temporarily abandoned wellbore. The proposed project consists of drilling, completing, and producing approximately 31 additional wells at 8 or more wells per section within the Little Monument Unit over the next 3 years. Drilling operations are proposed to begin in May 2003, and would continue for about 3 years, depending on the success of drilling.

Existing improved roads developed to service the production on Federal surfaces currently provide access to the Little Monument Unit. It is anticipated that the drilling of these proposed wells would require the construction of additional roads. The gas produced within the project area would be transported to market by an existing natural gas pipeline infrastructure. Additional gathering pipeline locations would be contingent on drilling success within the project area.

**Relationship to Existing Plans and Documents**

Resource Management Plan - The document which directs management of public lands administered by BLM within the Rock Springs Field Office is the approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Green River Resource Area (now the RSFO -USDI-BLM 1997). The objective for management of oil and gas resources, as stated in the RMP, is to provide for leasing, exploration, and development of oil and gas while protecting other resource values.

The development of natural gas within the Little Monument Unit is in conformance with the RMP. The environmental analysis prepared for the proposed additional wells in the Little Monument Unit would incorporate decisions, terms, and conditions of use as described in the RMP.

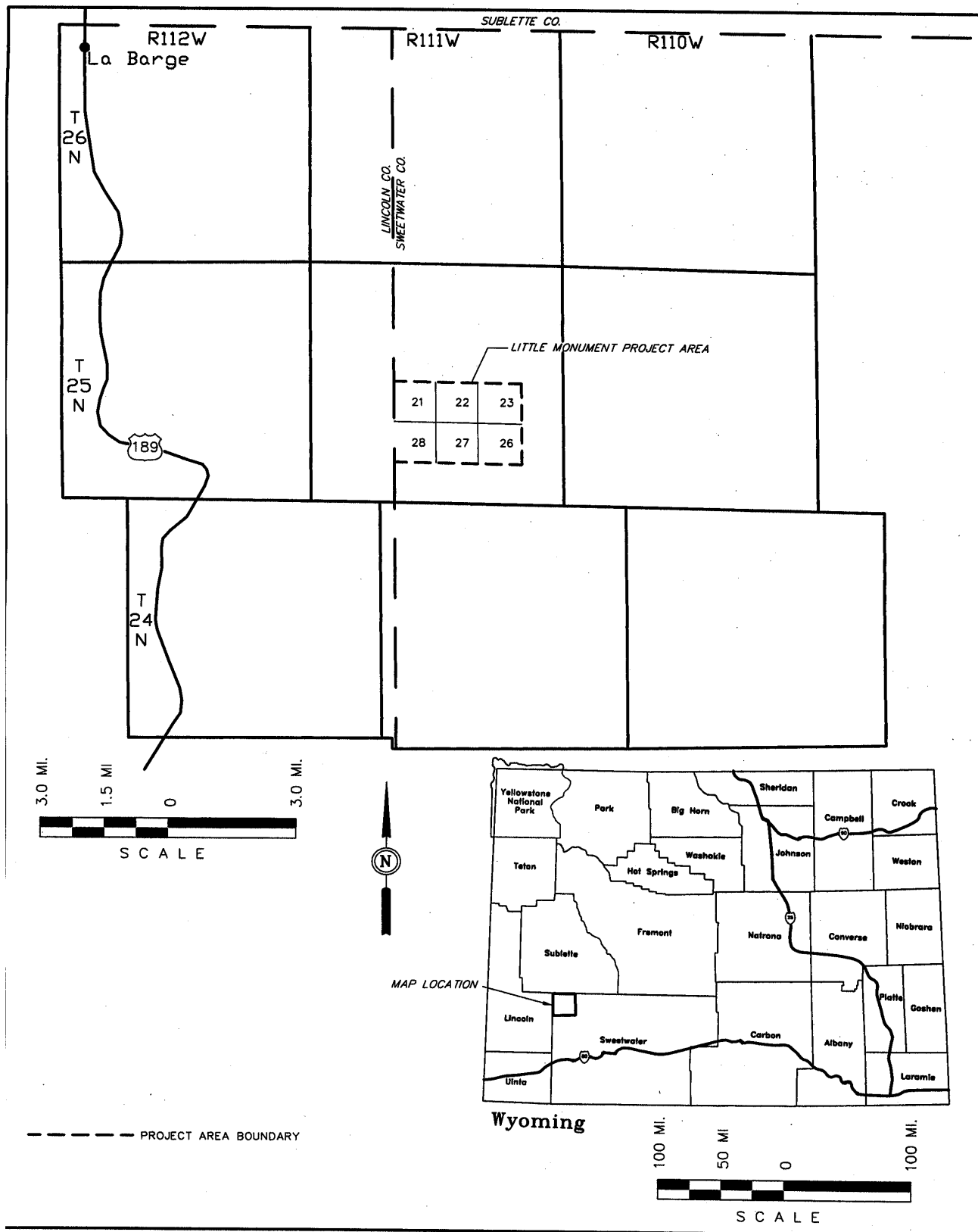


Figure 1-1. Location of the Little Monument Project Area, Sweetwater County, Wyoming

Use Authorizations - Use authorizations (i.e., rights-of-way, permits, etc.) for roads, pipelines, and well site facilities would be processed through the BLM Application for Permit to Drill (APD), Sundry Notice, or Right-of-Way permitting process.

Lease Stipulations - Some federal oil and gas leases within the proposed area may include special stipulations on occupancy. These stipulations are in addition to the standard lease terms and are designed to protect surface resources such as soils, water, and wildlife by restricting periods of activity or areas of disturbance. Application of these lease stipulations will be handled on a case-by-case basis for each APD submitted to the BLM.

Amended Record of Decision for Fontenelle Natural Gas Infill Drilling Projects/EIS – The Little Monument Unit lies within the Lincoln Road project area analyzed in the aforementioned EIS. The amended Record of Decision (ROD) approved up to 1,095 wells (780 on BLM-administered public lands and 315 wells on public lands managed by the Bureau of Reclamation) within the Lincoln Road project area. Burlington’s proposal is within the 1,095 wells approved in the amended ROD. However, to fully develop the federal mineral estate, Burlington has found it necessary to propose some wells at a spacing of less than the 80 acres analyzed in the EIS within their Little Monument Unit. The Little Monument Unit is outside of “Sensitive Resource Value Protection Areas” (e.g., wetlands, crucial winter range, raptor and Greater sage-grouse nesting, etc.) identified in Appendix D of the amended ROD. The analysis prepared for Burlington’s proposal will incorporate and tier to the Fontenelle Natural Gas Infill Drilling Projects EIS.

### **National Environmental Policy Act**

The proposed project will be analyzed in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). To comply with NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations, which implement NEPA, the BLM is required to prepare an environmental analysis. The environmental document will serve several purposes. It will provide the public and government agencies with information about the potential environmental consequences of the project and alternatives; identify all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the project and alternatives; and it will provide the responsible official with information upon which to make an informed decision regarding the project.

One element of the NEPA process is scoping. Scoping activities are initiated early in the process to:

- \$ identify reasonable alternatives to be evaluated in the environmental analysis;
- \$ identify environmental issues of concern related to the proposed project; and
- \$ determine the depth of analysis for issues addressed in the environmental document.

This scoping statement has been prepared to enable government agencies, the general public, and other interested parties to participate in and contribute to the analysis process. Public input is important in establishing the scope of analysis for any NEPA document, and the BLM encourages public participation.

## **Identified Resource Management Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities**

The following issues and concerns have been tentatively identified by an interdisciplinary team of BLM specialists. The issues identified below are not meant to be an all-inclusive list, but rather a starting point for public input:

- \$ Potential increased traffic and associated impacts on existing county, state, and BLM roads.
- \$ Potential socio-economic impacts to local communities.
- \$ Potential impacts to surface and groundwater resources, including sedimentation/salinity to the Colorado River system.
- \$ Potential impacts to sensitive soils within the project area.
- \$ Potential impacts from emissions resulting from additional drilling and production activities.
- \$ Potential impacts related to reclamation of disturbed areas and control of noxious weed invasions.
- \$ Potential impact to listed, proposed for listing, candidate, or sensitive plant species.
- \$ Potential conflicts with livestock management operations in the analysis area, including possible impacts to range improvement projects.
- \$ Potential impacts to cultural and historical values within the analysis area.
- \$ Potential impacts to wildlife habitats within the analysis area, including big game, Greater sage-grouse and raptors.
- \$ Potential impacts to listed, or proposed for listing, threatened and endangered plant and animal species, including potential Colorado River depletion and effects on downstream listed fish species.
- \$ Potential cumulative effects of drilling and development activities when combined with other ongoing and proposed developments on lands adjacent to the Little Monument Unit.

## **Timing Needs or Requirements**

Public input is important in establishing the level and scope of the analysis. The public is encouraged to participate throughout the environmental analysis process to help in identifying the level of analysis needed, alternatives to the proposed action, other issues or concerns that should be analyzed, mitigative opportunities, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure

the completeness of the analysis process.

Those who respond during public scoping will be provided with a copy of the document. Those who do not respond to public scoping will be notified that the document is available.

Your comments must be postmarked by January 3, 2003. Please submit your comments to:

Address: Teri Deakins, Project Manager  
BLM - Rock Springs Field Office  
280 Highway 191 North  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Email: Teri\_Deakins@blm.gov (Please add ALittle Monument Unit Project® in the Subject line)

A copy of this scoping notice has been mailed to the following individuals and organizations:

### **Government and Tribal Offices**

Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office (910, 912, 920, 930)  
Bureau of Land Management, Kemmerer and Pinedale Field Offices  
Office of the Governor  
U.S. Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Wyoming State Clearinghouse  
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality  
Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department (Cheyenne, Green River)  
Native American Tribes: Eastern Shoshone, Northern Ute, Northern Arapaho, Shoshone-Bannock

### **Elected and Other Officials**

Mayors of Rock Springs, Green River, Kemmerer, Diamondville, Cokeville, Granger, Opal,  
Postmaster of Farson  
State Senators: Rae Lynn Job, Mark Harris, Tex Boggs,, Ken Decaria  
State Representatives: Stephen Watt, Fred Parady, John Eyre, James Petersen, Louie Tomassi,  
Randall Luthi, Chris Boswell, Bud Nelson, Sandra Meyer, Bill Thompson  
Lincoln County Commissioners  
Lincoln County Planner  
Lincoln County Library  
Sweetwater County Commissioners  
Sweetwater County Planner  
Sweetwater County Libraries, Green River, Rock Springs  
U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Cubin, Kate Legerski, Representative  
U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, Lyn Shanaghy, Representative  
U.S. Senator Craig Thomas, Pati Smith, Representative

## **Public Land Users and User Groups**

Eighteen Mile Allotment Livestock Grazing Permittees  
Right-of-Way holders in the Little Monument Unit  
Biodiversity Conservation Alliance  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Fund for Animals  
Humane Society of the U.S.  
Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
OCTA  
People for the USA  
People for the West  
People for Wyoming  
Petroleum Association of Wyoming  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Sierra Club, Northern Plains Representative  
Southwest Wyoming Economic Development Association  
Southwest Wyoming Industrial Association  
Southwest Wyoming Mineral Association  
Sweetwater Wildlife Association  
The Nature Conservancy  
Trout Unlimited  
Wilderness Society  
Wyoming Advocates for Animals  
Wyoming Association of Professional Archaeologists  
Wyoming Chapter of the Sierra Club  
Wyoming Outdoor Council  
Wyoming Public Lands Council  
Wyoming Wildlife Federation

## **Newspapers**

Pinedale Roundup  
Sublette Examiner  
Kemmerer Gazette  
Little Chicago Review  
Afton Silver Star  
Rock Springs Daily Rocket-Miner  
Casper Star-Tribune  
Green River Star  
Wyoming State Journal  
Uinta County Herald  
Jackson Hole News  
Associated Press



**Radio Stations**

KQSW/KRKK/KSIT. Rock Springs  
KMKX - Rock Springs  
KUGR - Green River  
KYCS - Rock Springs  
KMER – Kemmerer  
KTAK/KVOW – Riverton  
KPIN – Pinedale  
KOTB/KEVA - Evantson  
Jackson Hole Radio – Jackson Hole  
KUWR - University of Wyoming  
Associated Press

**Television Stations**

KTWO-TV - Casper  
Public Broadcasting Station - Laramie